

Attachment 4.2(c): Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council: Response of the Designated State Unit and Explanation for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

Public Notification and Public Hearings

In order to ensure the opportunity for public comment regarding the annual revisions to the State Plan for Vocational Rehabilitation Services (VRS), five public hearings were held. To ensure adequate public notice, approximately 600 letters announcing the public hearing dates, times, and locations were mailed to "individuals, groups, and State agencies interested in the Vocational Rehabilitation Services State Plan." Members of the Indiana Council on Independent Living (ICOIL) and members of the Commission on Rehabilitation Services (State Rehabilitation Council) were sent individualized letters. All letters were dated April 27, 2007. The Indiana School for the Deaf and the Radio Reading radio stations were also sent letters of notification about the public hearings, which were dated April 27, 2008.

The VRS area offices were provided with information to enable them to create flyers and post the information in their respective offices. Thirty days prior to the first public hearing, notice was printed in eleven newspapers geographically located throughout the state. Public notice information was posted on the VRS website. The website information included the State Plan drafts for public review and comment. The public was provided with the e-mail address, mailing address, and FAX number and advised that comments could be submitted to VRS through June 11, 2007.

The public hearings were held in the following locations.

Indianapolis, IN	May 22, 2008	2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
South Bend, IN	May 22, 2008	1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Fort Wayne, IN	May 16, 2008	10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Bloomington, IN	May 30, 2008	10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Sellersburg, IN	May 23, 2008	1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

State Rehabilitation Council Input

Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act requires the State vocational rehabilitation agency to establish a State Rehabilitation Council (SRC). In Indiana, the required State Rehabilitation Council was established under the preexisting Indiana Rehabilitation Commission and is named the Commission on Rehabilitation Services, as stated in Indiana Code, IC 12-12-2-1. All Rehabilitation Act references to the "Council" in this report are applicable to the Commission.

Indiana's Commission on Rehabilitation Services has been established in compliance with the Rehabilitation Act. All Commission members are appointed by the Governor of the State of Indiana. A majority of the Commission members are individuals who have a disability, and are not employed by the State vocational rehabilitation agency. The

members serve no more than two consecutive full terms. No terms can exceed three years. The Rehabilitation Act further stipulates that the membership must be comprised of individuals representative of the following categories.

- Statewide Independent Living Council
- Parent Training and Information Center
- Client Assistance Program
- Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor
- Community Rehabilitation Program
- Business, Industry, and Labor
- Disability Advocacy Groups
- Current or Former Applicants or Recipients of Vocational Rehabilitation Services
- IN Department of Workforce Development
- IN Department of Education

Vocational Rehabilitation Services has been actively responsive and supportive of the Commission on Rehabilitation Services' suggestions and recommendations made throughout the year. The Commission members established forums in working with other Boards, Councils and agencies, and have provided Vocational Rehabilitation Services with the comments received during these outreach activities.

THE STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL'S (COMMISSION ON REHABILITATION SERVICES) INPUT INTO VRS FFY 2009 STATE PLAN DEVELOPMENT

On January 17, 2008, members of the Commission met with key Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff that are responsible for drafting specific State Plan attachments. The meeting was conducted to provide the Commission on Rehabilitation Services with the opportunity to provide input and assistance to Vocational Rehabilitation Services in developing annual revisions to the State Plan for Title I (Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program) and Title IV, Part B Supplement (Supported Employment Services).

The Commission also reviewed and provided input into the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Customer Satisfaction Survey. In preparation for the meeting, all Commission members were provided with the current State Plan via an electronic e-mail dated December 6, 2007. In addition, copies of the attachments, as outlined below, were also available during the meeting.

STATE PLAN ATTACHMENTS - UPDATED ANNUALLY

- Attachment 4.2(c) - Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council: Response of the Designated State Unit and Explanation for Rejection of Input or Recommendations:
- State Rehabilitation Council's Report on the Effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, FFY 2007

- Attachment 4.10 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development;
- Attachment 4.11(b) - Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services;
- Attachment 4.11(c)(4) - Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B, Funds; and
- Attachment 4.11(e)(2) - Evaluation and Reports of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities

STATE PLAN ATTACHMENTS - REVIEW AND REVISE IF APPLICABLE

- Attachment 4.8(b)(1) - Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System;
- Attachment 4.8(b)(2) - Coordination with Education Officials;
- Attachment 4.8(b)(3) - Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations;
- Attachment 4.8(b)(4) - Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services;
- Attachment 4.11(a) – Comprehensive Statewide Assessment;
- Attachment 4.11(c)(1) - State Goals and Priorities;
- Attachment 4.11(d) - State's Strategies and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities; and
- Attachment 6.3 - Quality, Scope and Extent of Supported Employment Services.

A power point presentation was provided by the Assistant Director of the Bureau of Rehabilitation Services in which each State Plan attachment was reviewed b light of the federal requirements. The power point presentation included Customer Satisfaction Survey information that was presented by a Program Director in the BRS Central Office. The Human Resource Development and Training Supervisor in BRS Central Office also utilized the power point presentation as a part of the information she shared for State Plan Attachment 4.10: Comprehensive System of Personnel Development.

The following suggestions, which were made relative to specific State Plan attachments, have been acted on by Vocational Rehabilitation Services staff.

STATE PLAN ATTACHMENTS - UPDATED ANNUALLY

Attachment 4.2(c) - Summary of Input and Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council: Response of the Designated State Unit and Explanation for Rejection of Input or Recommendations

The Commission had no comments about the general content of the draft being presented to them.

Public Hearings

Discussion about the State Plan public hearings resulted in the decision to have five sites (2

- North, 1 – Central. and 2 - South).

IvyTech locations were identified as appropriate for all of the hearings since there is the capability to utilize a teleconference setting, which would enable people to access the information more readily.

Potential sites:

North	South Bend and Fort Wayne
Central	Indpls. (Historical Society)
South	possibilities - New Albany, Bloomington, Princeton, Sellersburg, Columbus

Discussion also included the ability for people to telephone their comments into VRS Central Office. Matters associated with the callers need to self-identify and confidentiality were discussed. Carol Baker will look into the possibility of phone-in comments.

Attendance/Facilitators – The Commission’s Chairperson stressed that all Commission members should be involved in the public hearings and attend the location nearest their area. Carol Baker also explained that the VRS Region Manager and/or Area Supervisor always attend to facilitate the hearings. Clarification was provided regarding the purpose of the hearings. The hearings are for the purpose of gathering comments from the public specific to the State Plan documents and do not include presentations.

Customer Satisfaction Survey

The Customer Satisfaction Survey proposal was detailed as follows.

- Remove “Smiley Faces” from survey
- Flip responses so that positive response is on the right
- Add “NA” as a choice of response
- Add a descriptive phrase to each question for clarification of intent
- Combine redundant questions
- Change some of the language to “less simplistic”.
- For FY09, the survey will also be administered to Status 28 (“unsuccessful”) closures.
- During the coming year the CSS committee will address the possibility of other means of administering the survey.

Upon review, The Chairperson of the Commission stated that the survey should have a notation advising the individual that he or she can ask a parent, guardian, family member, friend, or advocate for help in completing the survey, and he requested that the information also be included on the survey itself.

The survey is provided to each VR client when the case is closed, which would include both successful and unsuccessful closures. The surveys are ranked as they come in.

The question was raised as to how it is determined that the quantity received is adequate for a valid response rate. It was explained that the period includes the end of the federal fiscal year – plus three months. If the sample does not appear to be adequate, the VRS Area office is asked to send a reminder to the clients who have not responded to the survey.

Future plans include placing the survey on the web and scanning the surveys rather than having someone type in the responses.

Currently, there is a 60% response rate.

The importance of the Commission's involvement was stressed. The Commission's Customer Satisfaction Survey Committee will continue to review the responses after they are summarized by VRS.

State Rehabilitation Council's Report on the Effectiveness of the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program, FFY 2007

This report is in the process of being completed and a draft will be shared with the Commission members in the near future.

Attachment 4.10 - Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

A document outlining projections, which is used to estimate staffing needs, was shared with the Commission.

Presently, there is one VR Counselor per 105 VR clients. The five year projection shows an increase in VR applicants and individuals eligible for services. The ever increasing number of staff nearing retirement must also be taken into account.

Indiana only has one Master's in Rehabilitation Counseling program which is at Ball State. It has not served as a continual source of recruitment of professionals, although the number of graduates is increasing. Other states in the Region such as Ohio have several master's programs from which to recruit.

Indiana has had difficulty in recruiting a sufficient number of qualified rehabilitation professionals with master's degrees. We are looking at establishing a certification program that would be recognized by the state which involved completing core courses in rehabilitation such as what will be offered through the Leadership Academy. This certification may enable us to hire at the bachelor's level.

The Chairperson of the Commission inquired about community rehabilitation program staff being a part of the VRS training. VR involvement with the INARF Training and Professional Development Committee (TPD) committee was described to the group. VR has some training dollars that can assist with joint training. Commission was asked to share training ideas or identified training needs to be addressed.

The Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) grant will allow for training of VR Counselors in how best to serve individuals with this disability.

Revisions to this attachment will be shared with the Commission following receipt of input from the VRS Management Team.

Attachment 4.11(b) - Annual Estimates of Individuals to be Served and Costs of Services

Revisions to this attachment will be shared with the Commission when the estimates become available.

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) - Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B, Funds

No changes were recommended.

Attachment 4.11(e)(2) - Evaluation and Reports of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities

Revisions to this attachment will be shared with the Commission following receipt of input from the VRS Management Team.

STATE PLAN ATTACHMENTS - REVIEW AND REVISE IF APPLICABLE

The Commission members did not make specific comments about any of the State Plan attachments that require revision if applicable at this time. The consensus was that the Commission supports the current language to include the goals and priorities. All members were assured that there will be future opportunities to expand on any of the information resulting from this meeting or resulting from future revisions as the attachments are revised in preparation for the public hearings and also prior to the State Plan to the federal government.